

Your CV is a vital tool in the jobseeking process. It's your first chance to impress a prospective employer and show why you're the graduate they should hire. On average, recruiters take just eight seconds to decide whether or not to keep a CV, so here's how to make sure yours is one of them...

- **Keep it concise**
Recruiters are often faced with mountains of CVs and don't have the time to pore over every detail at first glance. Your CV is only the first step to get your foot in the door, so keep it punchy and no more than two sides of A4 paper.
- **Profile yourself**
Apart from your name and contact details, you should start your CV with a short profile. Just write 3-4 lines telling the recruiter a little bit about yourself and the career you're looking for. You will need to tailor this for every application you send out.
- **Experience or education?**
Unless you have a minimum of 1 year's relevant work experience under your belt, you should put your degree next on your CV. If you do have relevant experience, include this first (only the most recent experience though) followed by your degree.
- **Bite the bullet**
Don't waffle on with paragraphs about your degree, the modules you covered etc etc. Present information in short, easy to read bullet points that are relevant to the position you're applying for.
- **It's all in the past**
Make sure you write your CV in the past tense. Talk about things you have done and have achieved your academic career has now ended, speaking in the past tense demonstrates your awareness of this and that you're prepared for the start of your career.
- **Get extra-curricular**
If you took part in any extra-curricular activities, make sure you include these (again where relevant) on the second page of your CV. This could include sports teams, Duke of Edinburgh awards, students union. Activities like this demonstrate transferable skills such as teamwork, communication and leadership.
- **Digital dangers**
Don't use a silly email address in your contact details! Recruiters will not be impressed by twinkletoes@hotmail.com. Set up a new address if necessary. And make sure your facebook/ MySpace/Bebo profile is locked down to friends only. It's common these days for recruiters to give your online profile the once over too.
- **Ensure it's error free**
The fastest way to get your CV discarded is by littering it with spelling and grammar mistakes. Use your spell check, re-read everything and ask someone else to proof read your CV for you before you submit it.
- **Tailor the fit**
Take time to adapt your CV for every job you apply for. Research the company and use the job description, then link your skills and experience to what they're looking for.
- **And finally...**
Tell the truth! If you need to lie on your CV to get an interview, then you're probably not right for the role, and you're likely to get caught out at the interview stage or assessment centre.